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cipal purchase of the plant at the swollen values due to the high rates charged.

3. "After such a reduction in rates, or upon the expiration of a franchise in a city which has managed other public works with success, and is not already involved in as many undertakings as it can manage, municipal ownership of monopolies is advisable."

Part III treats of Municipal Finances. Dr. Fairlie shows that in England and Wales, though the population trebled during the last century, the taxes collected by local authorities multiplied sevenfold. In France from 1836 to 1899, "while population has gained one-sixth, municipal expenditures have increased six times. The same tendency exists in other countries. In England and Wales municipal expenditures in 1890 were about \$10.03 per capita; United States (1890), \$6.80; Belgium (1892), \$5.97; France (1891), \$3.34.

Part IV deals with Municipal Organization, and closes with a chapter on Proposed Plans of Municipal Organization, in which the scheme of the committee of the National Municipal League is set forth. Dr. Fairlie believes that the city should be divided into permanent districts, recognizing the main natural boundaries, each district electing councilmen in proportion to population. "Such a system would make it difficult to gerrymander districts." "It is also adapted to plans of proportional representation. In the election of mayor an absolute majority of votes should be required at the first ballot, so that a candidate may not be chosen who is supported by a minority of the voters."

Each chapter is headed by an excellent bibliography. The value of all the discussions is enhanced by the constant comparison of cities in the various countries. Moreover, the statements are drawn from reliable sources and are brought well down to date. There are doubtless minor errors as on page 190, where, in stating the municipal grants to charitable institutions, the author overlooked the fact that Chicago makes an appropriation of \$10,000 or so yearly to the St. Vincent's Infant Asylum. These, however, are of little significance. Dr. Fairlie is to be congratulated on having done so much and done it so well.

The work will be of great service to all interested in municipal problems. It may well serve as the basis of class work, although the price has been fixed rather high for general college use.

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*The Anthracite Coal Industry.* BY PETER ROBERTS, Ph. D., with an Introduction by W. G. SUMNER, LL. D. Pp. 261. Price, \$3.50. The Macmillan Company, 1901.

Two-thirds of Dr. Roberts' monograph represents a type of economic

literature which is happily supplanting the theoretical studies of academicians. The author first describes the anthracite coal industry as an economic fact, afterwards indulges in a series of short sermons, taking his text from the facts presented. It is no great discredit to Dr. Roberts to say that in view of his close association with a most suggestive and stimulating environment, he has apparently gone far afield in the endeavor to present an application of the doctrine of *laissez faire*, which, while highly interesting, has no visible connection with the body of his work and is unlikely to be accepted by many of his readers. It is to be hoped, however, that in the companion volume, which the author has promised, he will confine himself more strictly to the description of situations, allowing his readers to square the facts with their own theories as best they can. The author can be sure that most of those who read his book have their own opinions as to the justice of existing economic institutions, and he can rely upon it that these opinions will be modified, if at all, by facts ungarnished with social philosophy.

With this brief word of suggestion, which is inspired by regret that the effect of good practical work should be in any way marred by gratuitous exhortation, let us turn to consider the real contribution which Dr. Roberts has made. The book is divided into twelve chapters, eleven of them mainly concerned with description and the twelfth with reflections upon the relations which should exist between the different productive factors. A summary of the contents of the volume will give the best idea of its importance. In chapter I, under the title, "The Anthracite Coal Deposits," the author discusses the physical and chemical nature of anthracite coal, the location and area of the coal fields, with some account of their geological structure, as bearing on the thickness and depth of the coal veins, and the total amount of coal still to be mined. Chapter II is concerned with the methods of mining, and shows in much detail the evolution of the present system from the simple quarry methods of early times. A feature of peculiar value is a precise statement of mining costs. Especially valuable also is an exposition of the method by which wages are determined. The facts presented in this chapter afford material by which the working out in coal mining of the law of diminishing returns can be fully illustrated. Chapter III estimates the capital invested in the anthracite fields and the average cost of producing a ton of coal. The author concludes, after presenting a gratifying amount of evidence, that the average cost of production is not far from \$1.25 per ton. Chapter IV, on transportation, leaves much to be desired. It is very well known that the transportation problem, especially in its relation to the capitalization and fixed charges of the anthracite coal carriers, is

of paramount significance to the industry, but the author passes it over with the briefest comment. It may be indeed, that this subject is too vast for even attempted treatment within the limits of a single chapter, but the brief account of the relations between the coal and transportation companies and the struggle of the independent operators for lower rates leaves many points of great interest unmentioned.

Chapter V, on "Mining Management and Discipline," is largely composed of a summary of the laws which regulate this subject, with explanations of the purpose and necessity of such regulations. Chapter VI, on "Employees and Wages," in the main traverses familiar ground. The personnel of the labor force is discussed, the rates of wages given, and some mention is made of the unseen factors, such as the price of powder, the number of days of work, the amount of dockage, and the variations in the size of veins, which influence the annual earnings of the miner. Particular emphasis is laid on the fact that the decreasing thickness of the veins must operate either to raise the rate of wages or to lower the standard of living of the miners. Chapter VII, is the most suggestive and original in the entire book. It deals with the "Incidental Profits of Operators," and is primarily concerned with the company store. The author shows that while these institutions enjoy marked advantages, in their freedom from bad debts, or advertising expenses, and in the lower charges for clerk hire and the lower prices which they can secure on their larger cash purchases over the independent or "truck" stores, they not only do not share these advantages with their customers, but as a rule charge from 10 to 30 per cent more for their goods than the independent store. Some of the arguments which Mr. Roberts gives on either side of the company store question are as follows:

For the company store, (1) "It offers the employee a store on which he can draw from the first day he works, to the full extent of his earnings; (2) "It gives the drunkard's wife the privilege of receiving the necessary monthly supply for the family before the husband gets his wages — —;" (3) It raises the standard of living of the labor population by forcing them to purchase a better grade of commodities. Against the company store, (1) Discouragement to the miner from never handling his earnings; (2) Encouragement to improvidence; (3) Deprivation of cash in hours of emergency; (4) Favoritism and tyranny in the mines. Chapter VIII deals with accidents in the mines. The number of accidents is given, and they are classified by causes, ages, and nationality. More accidents are ascribed to falls of rock and coal than to any other cause. From 1890 to 1899, 44.47 per cent. of the total were ascribed to this cause. The greater number of accidents from this cause are due to the carelessness of the miners,

especially to the carelessness of the foreign-born miners. Chapters IX and X deal with strikes and unionism. These are of a sketchy, historical character, the subjects being too extensive for adequate treatment within such narrow limits. The activities of the unions from 1868 to 1871, with the strikes of that period, the non-union interval, and the recent organization and successful strike are described. The description of the hold which unionism has upon the anthracite region at the present time is excellent. Chapter XI is entitled "Reclaiming the Waste." It describes the causes of waste and the methods adopted in recent years for marketing the smaller sizes of coal which were formerly wasted. Chapter XII is entitled "Reflections" and partakes strongly of the hortatory character. The volume is adequately illustrated by maps, diagrams and charts, and contains a large amount of statistical material, most of which will prove of value.

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*Studien zur Geschichte der Englischen Lohnarbeiter.* By GUSTAV F. STEFFEN. Vol. I, Parts 2 and 3. Pp. 335. Price, 7 m. Stuttgart: Hobbing & Büchle, 1901.

In the second and third installments of his careful investigation of the history of the English working people, Dr. Steffen has brought his inquiry down to about the middle of the eighteenth century. The first period, that before 1350, was covered in the first part of the volume and has been already reviewed.<sup>1</sup> The second period deals with the changes in the economic and legal status of the English working people during the breaking up of feudalism, from 1350 to 1540. During this time, the author finds that the purchasing power of the laborer increased steadily, but particularly during the years 1332-35 and 1376-78, and that his economic position was greatly improved. While not denying the effect of the black death in bringing about this result, by reducing the number of laborers, he considers that Rogers has greatly overestimated the importance of this event. Dr. Steffen does not accept Rogers' population statistics as conclusive, based as they are largely on the acreage in wheat, for he shows that rye and other grains formed an important part of the food supply of that period. The black death fell in the middle of a period of social change and only gave to the latter part of it a more radical character than it might otherwise have had. The change to money payments and a wage system had already begun in the first part of the fourteenth century, and was not the result of the black death, which at most but emphasized the change.

<sup>1</sup> See the ANNALS, May, 1901, p. 125.